

Laughlin members must sign up for Air Force Portal, page 5

Border Eagle

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Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas

March 12, 2004

Laughlin clinic to begin \$7.1 million renovation

By Airman 1st Class
Timothy J. Stein
Editor

The Laughlin clinic is starting the first phase of its \$7.1 million renovation project as temporary trailers are constructed around the clinic.

During the first phase, all administrative offices in the middle of the clinic will be moved to the temporary office buildings. All patient clinics will be relocated to the back of the clinic while the much of the rest of the building is undergoing renovation.

Once that is complete, the clinics will then move into their new centrally located areas.

The dental clinic and the pharmacy will remain where they are and only receive minor cosmetic renovations.

See Clinic, page 4



Courtesy photo

It's great to be home..

Members of the 47th Services Division bow their heads in prayer after a welcome home parade through Del Rio Sunday. The Services members returned home from a four-month deployment in Iraq. See story on page 5.

Sexual-assault response programs reviewed

Compiled from staff reports

In response to the directive of Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, Gen. T. Michael Moseley, to Air Force major commands, the commander of Air Education and Training Command, Gen. Donald G. Cook, announced March 4 that the command has fielded four review teams that will visit 12 command installations by March 26.

An eight-person team led by Col. Worth Carter, AETC Inspector General, will visit Laughlin Saturday through Wednesday to assess the status of Laughlin's sexual-assault

response programs.

In response to the Headquarters Air Force directive, General Cook has instructed the teams to evaluate each base's climate and examine existing plans, policies, programs and procedures at each installation to ensure existing programs to address sexual assaults are appropriate and effective in addressing this serious issue.

The teams will review sexual-assault reporting processes and programs and examine the effectiveness of the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) at each location. A separate review team has already visited

Sheppard Air Force Base near Wichita Falls and conducted a similar review.

Each team will visit three AETC bases and is comprised of a cross-section of Air Force officers, noncommissioned officers and civilians from the AETC staff. As part of the review process, AETC has set up a hotline people can use to provide information they think may be helpful to the command's review. The hotline number is (888) 351-9477.

The individual reviews will be compiled and provided to AETC and Air Force leaders for examination and further action as appropriate.

Newslines

Graduation scheduled

Specialized Undergraduate Pilot class 04-06 graduates at 10 a.m. today in the Anderson Hall auditorium.

Change of command set

The 96th Flying Training Squadron will hold a change-of-command ceremony at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday in Hangar 1.

Lt. Col. Jim Smetzer will assume command from Lt. Col. Ken Mattison.

For more information, call 298-4835.

Medical group to close

The 47th Medical Group will close from noon to 4:30 p.m. Thursday for group training.

All clinics will be closed and the Nurse Triage Line will not be available. Radiology, the laboratory and the pharmacy will also be closed. Afternoon dental and medical sick call will not be available.

The Tricare Service Center will be open.

If you have a medical emergency, report to Val Verde Regional Medical Center Emergency Room.

For other care, call (800) 406-2832.

Deployment stats

Deployed:	33
Returning in 30 days:	7
Deploying in 30 days:	0

Mission status

(As of Tuesday)

Days behind or ahead:

T-37, -3.44	T-1, 1.70
T-38, -1.40	T-6, -1.84

Mission capable rate:

T-37, 91.4%	T-1, 80.3%
T-38, 77.4%	T-6, 84.9%

Preparation key for families during separation



Commander's Corner

By Lt. Col. Joseph Lim
47th Flying Training Wing chaplain

Deployment is a duty and a challenge, not only for military members but also for families.

As military service men and women, we are tasked to put our lives in the service of our country. We all are entrusted the mission to protect our national interests and promote the cause of peace and freedom throughout the world. We have assumed that sacred duty and are ready to fight and win the war.

But it's the human factor that makes us hesitant sometimes. That's what deployment does – it takes us away from our families, and people we love. It takes us away from our network of relatives and friends who support us.

Family separation doesn't get any easier with time, but we need to develop strategies to cope with the reality of family separation and become expeditionary families.

Families experiencing duty separation find themselves facing a number of issues. There are things we can do about it.

There are logistical issues such as preparing a will, making sure the car is working properly and deciding whom to call in case of home-repair needs.

There are relationship issues such as developing a realistic and flexible plan for maintaining communication.

There are emotional and psychological

“Strengthen your support system by developing or utilizing the social networks already at your disposal, such as friends, work associates, church or chapel groups, neighbors, and other contacts who fit within the boundaries of your lifestyle and values.”

issues related to the feelings of loneliness and frustration, which will almost certainly be experienced at times by all members of the family.

Adequate preparation for all family members is the key to minimizing the problems, which will inevitably arise during the duty separation. Sometimes families avoid talking about things, that bother or worry them. They are afraid that talking about things will make matters worse. In reality, open discussion provides family members the opportunity to clarify potential misunderstandings, get a better idea of what to expect, and work out solutions to identified problems.

During the separation phase, natural changes will take place in the family system. These changes are the result of adaptation to the circumstances brought about by the separation. Most often these changes are quite positive and later have a positive role in the reunion as well.

We all experience changes in life. The most important tasks for the parent and children left at home are the maintenance of family stability and a sense of connection with the absent parent. A sense of family stability comes from maintaining when possible those family routines that are functional and meaningful to the remaining family members. It

also means developing new routines to replace those difficult to manage by one parent. Basically, children need to know someone is responsible, that someone will take care of them, and that the family is not going to fall apart because one parent is absent.

The most important aspect of parenting from a distance is making those small efforts to stay in touch. Strengthen your support system by developing or utilizing the social networks already at your disposal, such as friends, work associates, church or chapel groups, neighbors, and other contacts who fit within the boundaries of your lifestyle and values.

Border Eagle commentaries

The Border Eagle encourages base members to take part in their paper. Anyone wanting to write a commentary for the Viewpoint pages of the paper is welcome.

Commentaries can be written about any aspect of Air Force life you find interesting. Commentaries should be 250 to 500 words in length. Public Affairs reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.

Commentaries for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the Public Affairs Office, building 338. The deadline to submit a commentary is close of business each Thursday, the week prior to publication. For more information, call 298-5393.

Border Eagle

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Deadlines, Advertising

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.

Submissions can be e-mailed to: **timothy.stein@laughlin.af.mil** or **sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil**.

Motorcycle safety: Each rider a mentor



Chief of Staff's Sight Picture

By Gen. John P. Jumper
Air Force Chief of Staff

How many times have you heard a story like this one: A couple of friends at a party had been drinking and one suggested they take his new motorcycle to get more alcohol. They hop on the bike, no helmets, and the operator decides to show how fast the bike can go. He's been signed up for training, but he hasn't completed the course yet. Before long they're traveling at 120 mph in a 60 mph zone. The operator loses control and they crash. The passenger is killed, and the operator spends 30 days in the hospital.

Or one like this: A new motorcycle owner decides to get the biggest, baddest Harley he can get. He doesn't wear a helmet because he doesn't think it's "cool." He had preliminary motorcycle training and a learner's permit. He decides he can pass a car on the right around a curve. He loses control and launches 100 feet into the air. He dies on impact.

These actual incidents are only two examples of many similar stories that pass across my desk, and illustrate why we need to change the way we think about and approach motorcycle safety.

Motorcycles can be a great form of transportation and entertainment, but they must be respected. Lately, our Air Force members have been involved in a high number of motorcycle accidents, many of which were fatal. In fiscal year '03, we lost 24 Airmen to motorcycle accidents, most of which involved unsafe operation of single vehicles and operators who practiced poor risk management or operated beyond their

"My vision is for a mentoring program that will provide motorcycle operators the opportunity to work together to maximize their skills, reduce their chances for mishaps, and have fun in the process."

abilities, and lost their lives in the process.

Every member of our Air Force is critical for mission success. On the job, we exercise good operational risk management in performing difficult and dangerous tasks. We take care to train new operators in the safest practice of our profession. We provide oversight and guidance for inexperienced Airmen and young officers as they advance from apprentice to journeyman and craftsman. We pass on the benefits of our experience and correct mistakes to help our Airmen succeed. We should also do so during our off-duty activities. Our concern for our people should not end with the workday, and our safety consciousness should not end there either. Learning about a favorite activity can be enjoyable in itself. The proper training, safety instruction, and skill level make any activity more enjoyable.

Just as we ask experienced operators to mentor and train our less experienced ones, I am asking experienced motorcyclists to mentor new riders and help them develop their skills and knowledge about riding. For that reason, I have asked the Air Force Chief of Safety, with the assistance of the Vice Chief of Staff and the Air Force Operational Safety Council, to explore, develop, and field a motorcycle mentoring concept that could foster the education and skills development of our motorcycle riders. This Air Force-wide network of motorcycle clubs could foster relationships between riders who have been riding in an area for years and those new to the area or new to riding. They can also create a supportive environment of respon-

sible motorcycle riding and enjoyment while serving as a force multiplier for commanders' mishap prevention programs.

My vision is for a mentoring program that will provide motorcycle operators the opportunity to work together to maximize their skills, reduce their chances for mishaps, and have fun in the process. The formula is simple: fundamental knowledge in the form of street strategies and well-honed skills coupled with the most critical element – a responsible riding mindset.

I am also asking commanders to look out for their motorcycle riders. Make sure the troops under your command who ride are trained to do so. A commander's responsibility for safety does not end with the duty day. Actively seek out those who have bikes or are interested in taking up motorcycle riding. Make sure they take the safety courses offered on our bases, even if they have no intention of riding on base, and encourage them to join these clubs. I ask commanders to encourage all their people to live life off-duty with the same regard for safety we practice on duty.

To those who ride motorcycles, I respect your right to choose a motorcycle as a form of transportation and/or recreation. But, I ask you to operate them safely, practice good risk management, and operate within your abilities. Above all, make sure you are wearing the proper safety equipment. Also, look out for those who aren't ready for more advanced challenges and prevent them from engaging in dangerous behavior. I'm a new rider myself, and I will be taking an approved motorcycle training course to make sure I am qualified to ride before I take my bike on the road. I'm looking forward to riding, but only when I have the skills necessary to ensure I won't be a danger on the road. And I won't go anywhere without my helmet.

Only through your efforts will we reduce the mishap rate throughout our Air Force. We will provide the tools necessary – it is every rider's responsibility to put them to use.



Actionline 298-5351 or actionline@laughlin.af.mil

Col. Dan Woodward
47th Flying Training Wing commander

This column is one way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels. By

including your name and phone number, you are assured of a timely personal reply. It's also useful if more information is needed to pursue your inquiry. We will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved. Please keep e-mails brief.

If your question relates to the gen-

eral interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Below are some useful telephone numbers that may be helpful when working your issue with a base agency.

AAFES	298-3176
Finance	298-5204
Civil Engineer	298-5252
Civilian Personnel	298-5299

Clinic	298-6311
Commissary	298-5815
Dormitory manager	298-5213
EEO	298-5879
FWA hotline	298-4170
Housing	298-5904
Information line	298-5201
Legal	298-5172
MEO	298-5400
Military Personnel	298-5073
Public Affairs	298-5988
Security Forces	298-5900
Services	298-5810

Clinic, from page 1

The renovation will transform a building that was designed almost 30 years ago to be an inpatient facility into a more efficient setting to provide outpatient care, said Lt. Col. Susan Baker, 47th Medical Support Squadron commander.

“The space in the clinic now is badly allocated,” said Colonel Baker “Many of the rooms we use for offices have a lot of room while the clinic area has small exam rooms and not enough of them. The goal of the remodeling is to readjust that space.”

The facility’s administrative offices are scheduled to move to the temporary buildings April 5. The clinics are set to begin moving to the rooms in the back of the building during the first week of June.

Two offices are already no longer be located at the clinic, said Colonel Baker. The Health and Wellness Center has moved to Anderson Hall temporarily and will go to the new fitness center once that is complete. The Military Equal Opportunity Office is located at the veterinary clinic until the new wing headquarters building is complete.

The new design will be more like newer clinics found around the country with a mall-type atmosphere, she



Photo by Master Sgt. Keith Reed

Best of care...

Col. (Dr.) Charles Meyer checks the medical charts of a wounded servicemember being transported from Iraq to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. Dr. Meyer heads a Critical Care Aero-medical Transport Team, which also includes a nurse and a respiratory technician. They are Guard and Reserve members assigned to the 791st Expeditionary Aero-medical Squadron, based at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

said. Patients will walk in and have all the different clinics in one central area. People won’t have to wander up and down the hallways looking for different clinics. There also will be a mall-like reception room, waiting area a medical records area.

The Tricare Service Center will also move. Its new location will be next to the pharmacy for convenience.

The moving of the clinics has been

planned so that it will not affect patient care, said Colonel Baker.

“We don’t expect any changes in patient care,” she said. “We have it planned out so we can still see the same patient load while moving the clinics.”

The first part of the renovations to the clinic is expected to take about a year.

“[The new layout] will be better for the clinic staff also,” said Colonel

Baker. “With everything centrally located, the clinics can support each other much better if one of them is short manned.”

The second phase of the project, which will renovate the offices in the back of the clinic to become the new administrative offices, is set to begin in about a year.

The entire project is expected to take about two years to complete.

Newslines

Crud tournament set

The wing commander is sponsoring a Crud tournament for all permanent-party officers. The tournament will be held at Club XL beginning at 6 p.m. April 2.

For more information or to sign up, call Capt. Kat Burkhead at 298-5223 by 4:30 p.m. today.

Wellness classes scheduled

A Diabetes Wellness class will be held from 9 to 11:30 a.m. followed by a Healthy Heart class from 1 to 2 p.m. Tuesday in the 47th Medical Group family practice conference room.

Information on nutritional strategies, exercise, and medications will be covered.

For more information, call 298-6463 or 298-6464.

Education townhall meeting set

A townhall meeting hosted by Col.

Keith Traster, 47th Flying Training Wing vice commander, is set for 5:30 p.m. March 24 at the base theater.

Information will be provided on education initiatives between the base and school, and an update on the base’s Education Tiger Team, formed last year, will be presented. All parents with children in the local school system are invited to attend.

Dog section needs luggage

The 47th Security Forces Squadron military working dog section is looking for all types of suitcases or travel bags to help in its training.

To donate luggage, call the kennel master at 298-5860.

Special tax benefits explained

Tax laws provide some special benefits for active members of the military, including those serving in combat zones.

Members who served in a combat zone or qualified hazardous duty area can exclude certain pay from income.

The IRS automatically extends the deadline for filing tax returns, paying taxes, filing claims for refund and taking other actions related to federal income tax for U.S. Armed Forces personnel serving in a combat zone.

The IRS also extends the deadline for those in the U.S. Armed Forces deployed overseas away from their permanent duty station in support of operations in a hazardous duty area but outside the qualified hazardous duty area.

The deadline for filing returns, making payments or taking any other action with the IRS is extended for at least 180 days after either the last day of qualifying combat zone service, or the last day of any continuous qualified hospitalization for injury from service in the combat zone.

Tax help is still available. Set up an appointment with your squadron representative or call the tax center at 298-4858.

College registration open

Registration for the spring term at

Park University is open now until Monday. Late registration is open from Monday through March 22.

For more information, call Vikki Cunningham at 298-5593.

New TMO procedures set

The Traffic Management Office Personal Property Section will now focus entirely on counseling inbound and outbound personnel on personal property entitlements and quality assurance functions, while the actual scheduling of personal property shipments will be the responsibility of the Joint Personnel Property Shipping Office located in San Antonio.

TMO will coordinate the booking of shipments with JPPSO, but it is important people contact TMO as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to conduct personal property counseling and schedule the shipment.

To arrange for an appointment or for any questions, call 298-5388, 298-5389 or 298-5189.

Services team returns from duty in Iraq

By Tech. Sgt. Anthony Hill
Public affairs

Seven members of the 47th Services Division returned home Sunday following a four-month deployment in Iraq.

The Airmen were treated to a welcome home parade in Del Rio as soon as they arrived from San Antonio. American Legion volunteers met the team’s bus just outside the city limits. Fire trucks and police cars with wailing sirens, along with people in their personal vehicles blowing horns and waving flags, paraded the group up Bedell Ave. and Veterans Blvd.

“There were a lot of merchants out waving at us as we went by,” said Master Sgt. Ricky Harting, the deployed members’ team leader. “[The parade] was definitely unexpected. It was heartfelt and touching, and really brought back what we went and did and what it meant to the people of Del Rio. It was very appreciated.”

Following the parade, the group was taken to the

American Legion Hall for a presentation, then to Laughlin where they were greeted by family members, co-workers and friends. Two other Services members, Tech. Sgt. Anthony Williams and Senior Airman Johanbakas Badshah, also deployed with the group in October, but returned early.

“It’s good to have you back,” said Col. Vic Hnatiuk, 47th Mission Support Group commander, to the team after arriving on base. “I remember the last words I said to [Sergeant Harting] before he left ... was that I want you to bring nine back.”

That’s just what the team leader did, returned safely home with his eight other group members after serving at Kirkuk Air Base in northern Iraq.

“I encouraged everyone to stay vigilant,” Sergeant Harting said. “One of the things our group commander at Kirkuk would always say was ‘take care of yourselves, take care of your buddies, take care of the mission, and everything will fall into place.’ We had to live by that. We were a tight-knit group and saw each

other on a daily basis. These guys were always checking on each other, and I was always trying to check on them.”

The group worked in a variety of Services specialties while deployed, including lodging and food service, fitness and recreation, and mortuary affairs. While constantly subject to the potential danger of gunfire and mortar attacks, the Airmen continued with their work at hand.

For Staff Sgt. Javier Aguirre, familiar with many deployments, this one was different than those he had been on before.

“[We] were more focused on protecting [ourselves],” he said. “There were several times we had to take care of our lives and run into a bunker.”

Sergeant Aguirre said he

came away with a perspective that [Iraqis] need the coalition forces there. “That country is war-torn,” he said. “Our presence there will be beneficial to rebuilding it.”

Staff Sgt. Timothy Coffey, who had deployed to Saudi Arabia many times, said he had never been at a base where he had to worry about mortars flying overhead.

“On my next deployment, I’ll be prepared,” he said. “No one will have to tell me what to do when a mortar hits or there are bullets flying all around you. I have been deployed countless times, but this felt like I was actually in war.”

This was the first deployment for Senior Airman Terrell Morris, Airman 1st Class Crystal Faircloth and Airman Robert Ashford.

“I came away [from the deployment] with a better respect for freedom,” said Airman Morris.

The base was built up as a tent city when the group arrived there, but wasn’t what Airman Faircloth envisioned.

“I expected it to be more of a bare-base situation,” she said. “We still had more to set up. But, if I had to [deploy] again, I think I could do it.”

The deployment was especially fulfilling for Tech. Sgt. Steve Gracy, who will be retiring soon after 20 years of military service.

“I was in the first Gulf War,” he said. “It was satisfying that we finally finished the job we started in 1990. We went back and got [Saddam Hussein].”

See **Return**, page 7

Air Force Portal comes to Laughlin

Compiled from staff reports

An initiative to better manage information technology operations is bearing fruit with the latest iteration of the Air Force Portal.

All Laughlin members must establish a Portal account by March 19 by logging on to <https://www.my.af.mil> and clicking on the self-registration link. The registration process is self-guided.

In a December memo, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche and Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. John P. Jumper wrote, “The Air Force Portal will be the airman’s interface to all services and information needed to perform his or her job.”

The Portal delivers complete integration of the IT systems and applications used throughout the Air Force, officials said. It provides an exponential leap in the way Air Force people gather, store, process and deliver information and operate systems critical to mission accomplishment.

The system was developed to incorporate as many Air Force information applications as possible. The result of such an integration is that systems such as the Vir-

tual Military Personnel Flight or functional area applications such as a munitions ordering or parts tracking system would all be accessible from one site, officials said.

One of the primary advantages of the Portal is single user login. Once users log in, the Portal allows them to access many applications, such as the vMPF, assignment management system and other Web-based programs, without having to provide a username and password again to access the applications.

A recent change to the Portal allows users to access the system from any Internet-connected computer at home, at work or on the road, officials said.

In addition to providing access to existing Air Force applications, the portal provides functionality of its own. The portal includes a “white pages” link that lists everybody in the Air Force. It includes a personalization feature that lets users set up screens for their own needs.

In Air Education and Training Command, base registration is taking place in a phased schedule between March and April. The phased approach allows people across the command to register without overtaxing the system, officials said.



Graduation

SUPT Class 04-06 graduates



Capt. Jason Welch
C-17 (AFRES)
Charleston AFB, S.C.



2nd Lt. Keith Anderson
T-38C
Laughlin AFB



2nd Lt. Shiraz Dalal
KC-135
Robins AFB, Ga.



2nd Lt. James Demchak
C-5
Dover AFB, Del.



2nd Lt. Brian Dodson
C-17
Charleston AFB, S.C.



2nd Lt. Gregory Etter
KC-10
Travis AFB, Calif.



2nd Lt. Meghan Fridley
C-17
McChord AFB, Wash.



2nd Lt. Timothy Griffith
B-1
Dyess AFB



2nd Lt. Klayton Ives
T-6
Laughlin AFB



2nd Lt. Stephen Jones
C-21
Peterson AFB, Colo.



2nd Lt. Lindsey Lamb
F-16
Luke AFB, Ariz.



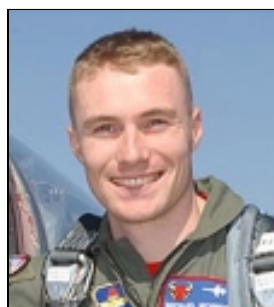
2nd Lt. Michael Lashinski
KC-135
McConnell AFB, Kan.



2nd Lt. James Lewis
B-1
Dyess AFB



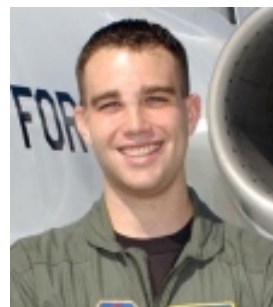
2nd Lt. Brady McConnell
KC-135
Fairchild AFB, Wash.



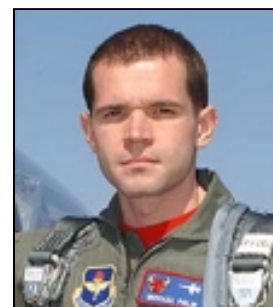
2nd Lt. Michael McGrew
F-16
Luke AFB, Ariz.



2nd Lt. Emily Nelson
C-17
McGuire AFB, N.J.



2nd Lt. Ted Northrop
C-21
Andrews AFB, Md.



2nd Lt. Michael Palik
F-15C
Tyndall AFB, Fla.



2nd Lt. Robert Peel
F-16 (ANG)
Tucson, Ariz.



2nd Lt. Patrick Pulaski Jr.
KC-135
Kadena AB, Japan



2nd Lt. Kyle Rainey
C-17
McGuire AFB, N.J.



2nd Lt. Daniel Slater
KC-135 (ANG)
Rickenbacker Field, Ohio



2nd Lt. Dan Wallace
KC-135
Robins AFB, Ga.



2nd Lt. William Weldon
T-1
Laughlin AFB

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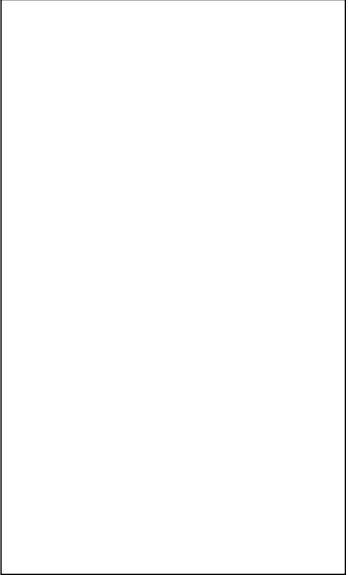
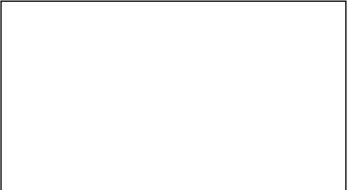
Sergeant Gracy said he thinks the new troops today will carry on and do the job well.

Sending nine Airmen to accomplish America’s goals and getting nine back home was the true significance of welcoming the team back from their deployment on Sunday, said H.F. “Chip” Faver, 47th Services Division director.

“The turnout at our welcome home, both on Laughlin and in town, speaks to the highest levels of dedication these communities have to the on-going mission of the Air Force and the U.S. military,” he said. “Our communities came out to recognize that fact, and thank God for their return.”

Interested
in the Air
Force?

Call Del Rio’s Air
Force recruiter at
774-0911.



DoD establishes additional sexual assault hot line

WASHINGTON – The Department of Defense announced March 4 that an additional toll-free telephone number has been established for people who want to contact or provide information to the Department of Defense Task Force on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault.

The number, (800) 497-6261, is staffed 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld recently ordered a senior-level inquiry into the reported sexual assaults in Iraq and Kuwait, and how the armed services treat victims of sexual assault. Army and Air Force officials have opened similar investigations.

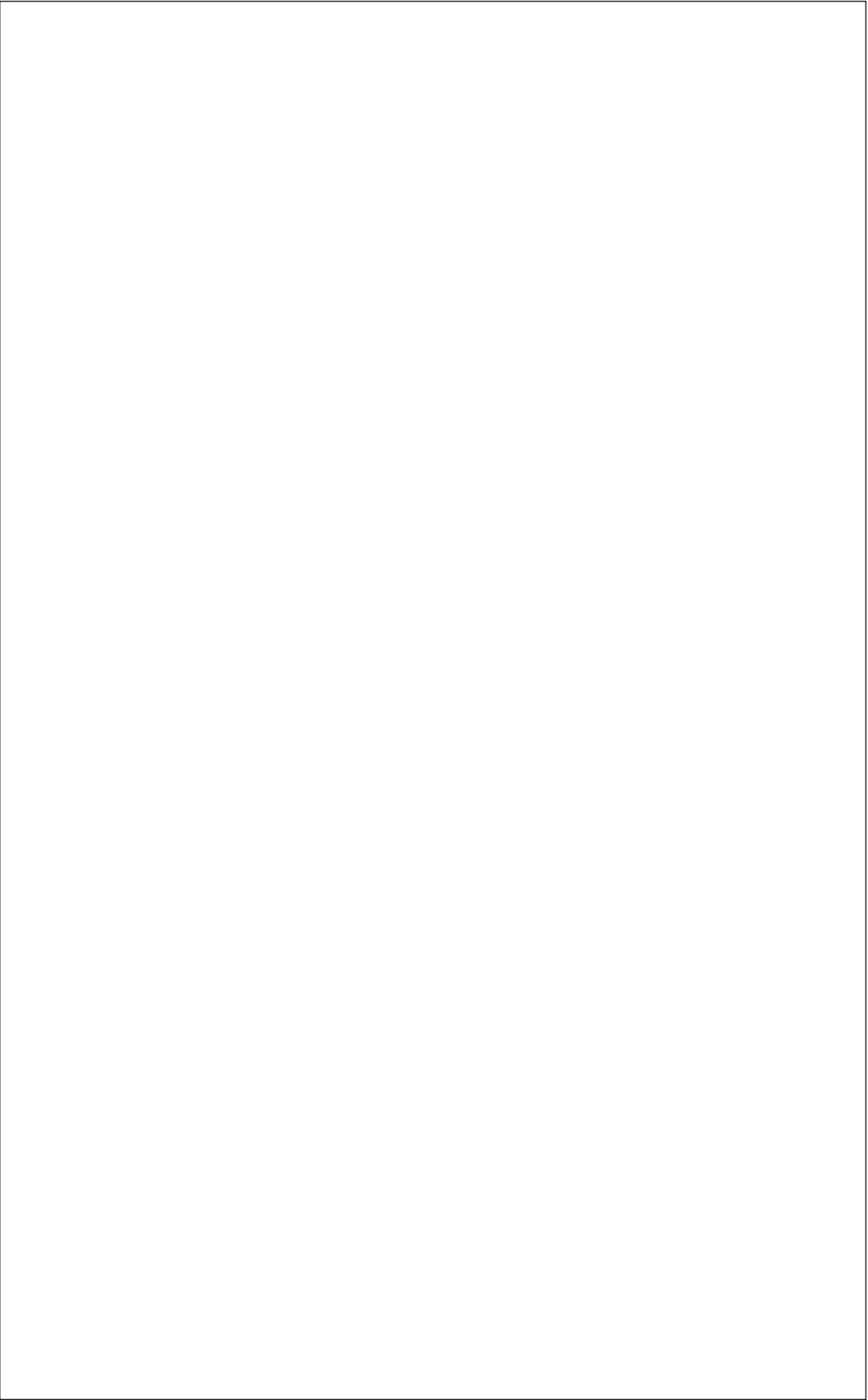
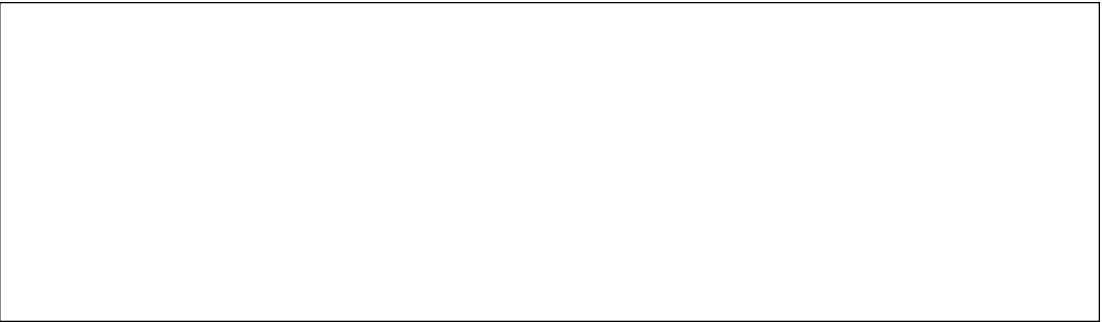
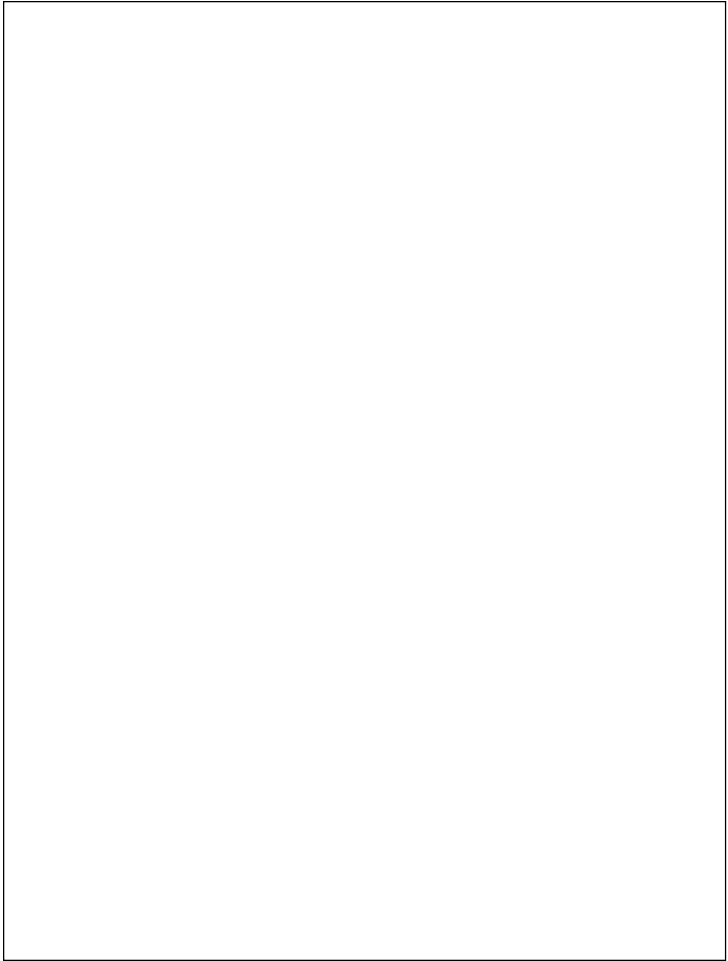
David S.C. Chu, under-

secretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said that the findings of the 90-day review are due by April 30.

“Every servicemember deserves to be treated with the utmost respect and dignity,” Mr. Chu said. “Sexual assault is criminal conduct and will not be tolerated in the Department of Defense.”

Mr. Chu said he believes the information from the call center will help the task force and defense officials in developing policies and programs to improve assistance for victims of assaults and enhance efforts at prevention.

(Courtesy Air Force Print News)



Laughlin celebrates Women’s History Month

By Airman 1st Class
Timothy J. Stein
Editor

March is Women’s History Month and Laughlin is getting into the act by having several discussion groups through out the rest of the month.

Women’s History Month got its start in California when Sonoma County’s education task force saw that women’s history was virtually an unknown topic in the school’s curriculum. The task force initiated a “Women’s History Week” celebration in 1978. March 8 was chosen to be the focal point as it was already know as International Women’s Day.

The week was very popular and soon neighboring counties also began to celebrate the week. President Jimmy Carter issued a Presidential Message to the American people, encouraging the recognition and celebration of women’s history during the week of March 8.

In 1981, there was a Joint Congressional Resolution declaring the week of March 8 as National Women’s History Week. In 1987 after receiving requests from women’s

organizations, museums, libraries, youth leaders and educators around the country, Congress expanded the national celebrations to the entire month of March.

Laughlin Women’s History Month events

■ A mentoring session for all female officers will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday in the Daedalian Room at Club XL.

For more information, call Chaplain (Capt.) Terri Gast 298-5111.

■ Two activities are scheduled to be held from 8 to 10 a.m. March 23 in Daedalian Room at Club XL.

Bobby Barrera, 47th Mission Support Squadron, will speak about hope and possibility from 8 to 9 a.m.

Tech. Sgt. Karon DeShields, 47th Flying Training Wing, will speak about sexual harassment from 9 to 10 a.m.

For more information,

call Esther Gomez at 298-5299.

■ A panel of previously deployed female military members will meet 10 to 11:30 a.m. March 23 in Daedalian Room at Club XL.

For more information, call 2nd Lt. Myzsa Grandell at 298-5314.

■ A luncheon is set for 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 26 at Club XL.

Brenda McCain, a civilian personnel officer form Randolph Air Force Base will be the guest speaker.

For more information, call Rosemary Capozziello at 298-5859.

Roche requests Army nomination be withdrawn

WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche is no longer in the running for the vacant secretary of the Army job.

Secretary Roche requested Wednesday that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld withdraw the nomination. President George W. Bush nominated Secretary Roche for secretary of the Army July 7 but the Senate Armed Services Committee had yet to report on the nomi-

nation to the full Senate for a vote.

“Given the range of issues before the Senate in a busy legislative year, I accept that my nomination is unlikely to be considered this year,” Secretary Roche said. “In the interest of the Department of Defense, I decided it was best that I withdraw from further consideration.

“I intend to apply myself to the full range of important matters facing the Air Force,

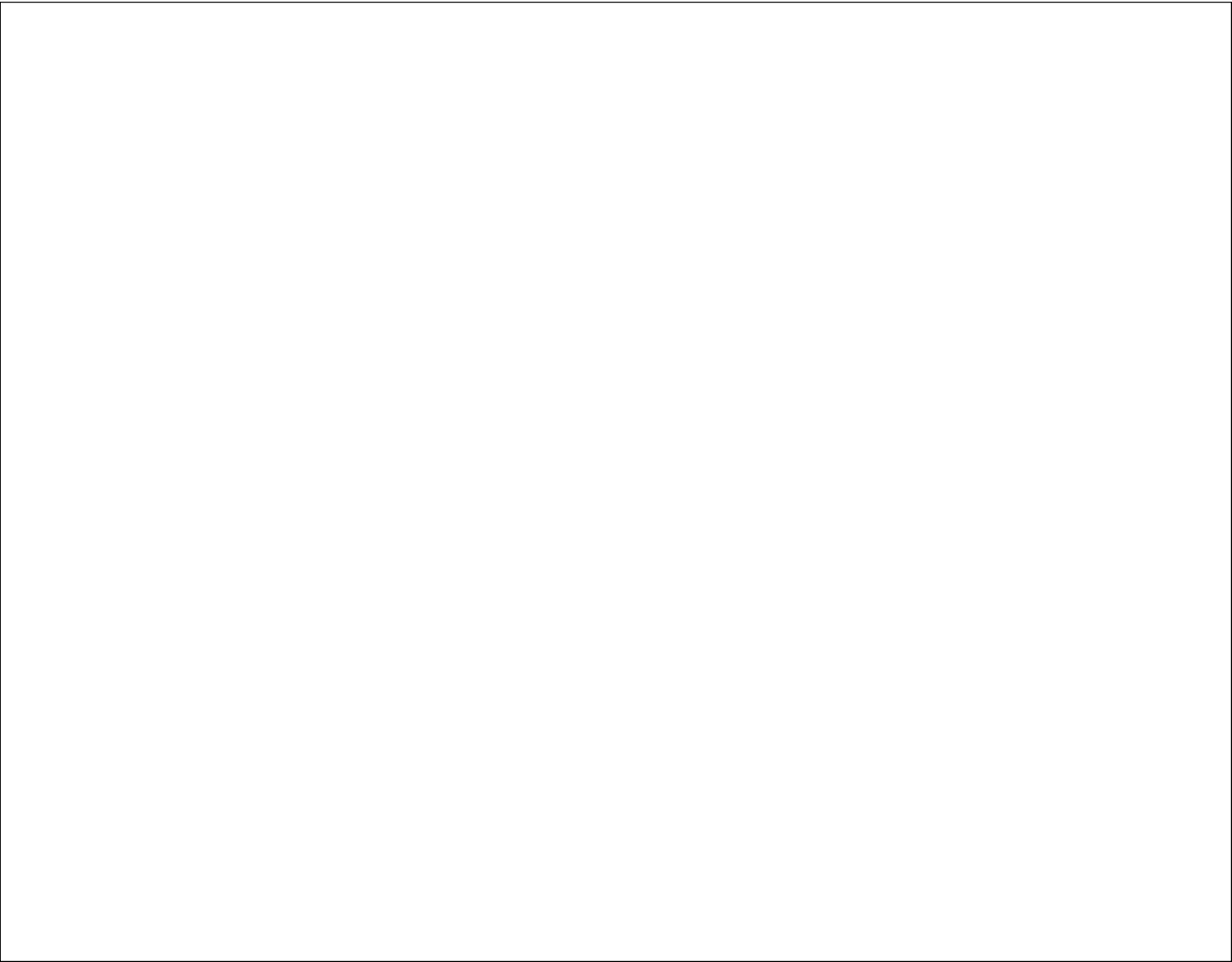
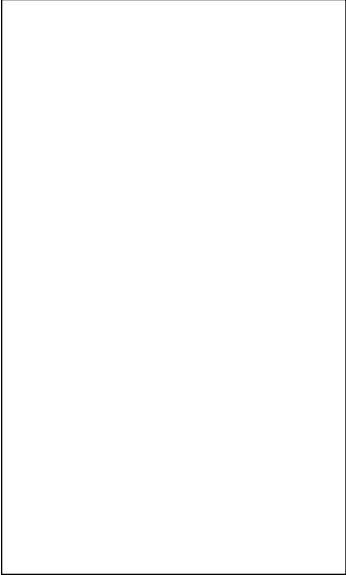
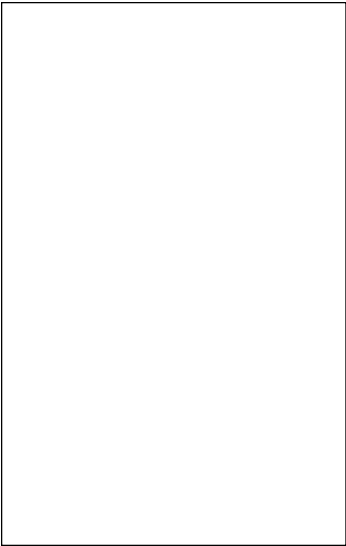
including the fine Airmen who are serving our country so proudly,” Secretary Roche said.

In acknowledging Secretary Roche’s decision, Secretary Rumsfeld said, “Jim Roche has served ably as secretary of the Air Force and would have been a first-rate secretary of the Army. I look forward to continuing to work with him.”

(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)

ONLINE
news

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Some personnel services become Web-only

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE – Starting Monday, Airmen will no longer have to stand in line to accomplish a personnel records review or several other common tasks.

To make it easier for personnel customers, six different personnel services are now available only on the Web. Military personnel flight workers will point customers toward the Internet if they want to do any of the following:

- Update the Record of Emergency Data.
- Apply for a change to an assignment or a report-not-later-than date.
- Apply for certain curtailments of date eligible for return from overseas.
- Accomplish a humanitarian or exceptional family member program application.
- Request a “proof of service” letter, often needed for home loans.
- Make simple updates to common information like home address, home telephone number, religious preference, race, ethnic group, foreign lan-

guage self-assessment, duty and personal e-mail addresses.

For people using these services, questions can be answered 24 hours a day online or by a toll-free call to the Air Force Contact Center.

The changes indicate the maturing of the virtual MPF concept and the realities of how busy Airmen are now with fighting the war on terror, said Maj. Gen. Thomas A. O’Riordan, Air Force Personnel Center commander here.

“The primary goal of our virtual services is to save time for our Airmen and commanders in the field,” he said. “These transactions are simple and direct. We’ll achieve better accuracy and save the Airman a trip to the MPF.”

The AFPC director of operations said this is part of an evolution in the way personnel services will be delivered to Airmen in the future.

“We’ve been headed in this direction for a long while,” Col. Dale Hess said. “Our Air Force Contact Center has positioned itself to pick up some of the services by phone or online that

people used to have to stand in line for, and we’re aggressively upgrading our online capabilities.”

Officials said they expect that more online services will mean less work on both sides of personnel flight help desks, and that they anticipate the average time spent waiting in line for other services will decrease for customers visiting personnel flights.

“We are very concerned about creating more work under the rubric of automation,” the general said. “The goal is to slash time across the system and not simply outsource the workload to the Airman.”

The changes do not mean that Airmen will not have applications for programs reviewed. The level of approval is not changing; instead, approvals will be routed electronically to the correct approving officials.

For instance a DEROS change requested on vMPF will now be routed to the contact center, which coordinates the request through the person’s gaining and losing commanders.

“These processes should also move much quicker,” said Jan McIntosh, vMPF functional manager at the AFPC. “The nice thing is the member could initiate these actions at any time – even at 3 a.m. from home if they wish.”

Colonel Hess emphasizes that Airmen will not be turned away from the MPF.

“We’ll make sure our customers are guided through the process and it’s explained to them,” he said. “Airmen nowadays are very adaptable and computer-literate. In no time, this will be second nature to everyone.”

Airmen can access the vMPF through the Air Force Portal, at www.my.af.mil, by clicking on the “careers” tab. It is also available at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil.

For more information, call the Air Force Contact Center at (800) 616-3775.

(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)

Civilians will see pay increase soon

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE – Air Force civilian employees soon will see extra money in their paychecks. An executive order was signed by the president March 3 authorizing a pay adjustment retroactive to Jan. 11.

Air Force Personnel Center officials here began loading new pay tables into the system beginning Thursday. But as in 2003, not all employees will receive the retroactive pay at the same time.

Most general-schedule employees will see the increase plus a retroactive lump-sum in their paychecks by May, said personnel officials. It may take longer for employees who have personnel actions – like a promotion or step increase – since Jan. 11 to see the money.

Medical special-rate employ-

ees’ records will be updated beginning March 19.

Federal-wage system and nonappropriated-fund schedules are not yet published. Those updates will be processed as soon as pay schedules are available, said personnel officials.

The increase averages .9 percent in locality pay, plus a 1.2 percent increase in base pay. To view locality pay increases by location for general-schedule employees, visit www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2004/ATT2-04.asp.

Employees should check with their civilian personnel offices if they have questions or need more information.

(Courtesy of Air Force Print News)



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shelley Gil

Staff Sgt. Jason Justice prepares to attach a fuel line to a B-1B Lancer. Airman Justice is deployed to the 40th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron supporting operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

The *XLer*

Capt. Nathan Day
86th Flying Training Squadron

Hometown: Phoenix, Ariz.
Family: Single
Time at Laughlin:
Almost two years
Time in service:
Four years, 10 months
Greatest accomplishment: Introduced the “Neal” and “Murray” to the 86th Flying Training Squadron
Hobbies: Running, weight lifting and playing guitar
Bad habit: Sarcasm and the inability to answer honest questions
Favorite movie: “Old School”
Favorite musician: 50 Cent
If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be? I would eat lunch with Neal and Murray and trap them for an hour straight.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Timothy J. Stein

Airmen learn convoy skills while in Iraq

By Senior Airman James Dillard
386th Air Expeditionary Wing
public affairs

SOUTHWEST ASIA –The grizzled, old retired Army instructor imparted combat wisdom to his students, as if he were reading directly from the combat bible.

The most important thing he wanted them to take away from the training was when they drive into combat areas, they better look like death coming down the road. A threatening target is much less inviting than a meek one.

The students were at the end of a five-day course. Each of them was covered in countless layers of sand, and they looked like they had been through days of combat. Despite lack of sleep, fatigue and poor living conditions, their eyes were bright with excitement and relief. It was finished.

But, the true test was just beginning.

The course, held by Military Professional Resources Inc., is taught in the middle of nowhere in Southwest Asia. The course's basic func-

tion is to teach servicemembers how to survive while conducting convoy operations in potentially hostile locations. People from all military branches have gone through the course at some point.

"Without a doubt, this program will help save lives," said John Fracassini, an instructor for MPRI and retired Army Special Forces member. "I think it's absolutely critical for them to take this course. It enhances their survivability, as well as the odds of mission accomplishment."

For the Airmen in the course, the training will be put to direct use. Deployed from bases worldwide, the Airmen are part of a program to augment Army convoy operations in Iraq.

The instruction includes both classroom and field training. Mr. Fracassini said one is equally as important as the other.

"It's in the classroom where they gain an understanding of the fundamental procedures," he said. "If they don't have that understanding, they won't have the proper perspective when they go out and perform in the field."



Photo by Senior Airman James Dillard

Master Sgt. David Voltz (left) speaks with John Fracassini, an instructor with Military Professional Resources Inc., after a convoy live-fire exercise. The exercise was designed to teach transportation Airmen how to fire on hostile forces, while continuing to travel through the "kill zone." Sergeant Voltz was acting as the serial commander for the exercise. He is deployed from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

Both portions of the course work in tandem to maximize the effectiveness of the training.

Technical Sgt. Bryan Larson, who is deployed from Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., said he appreciated the opportunity to take the course.

"We're really going to need the training for convoy support in Iraq," he said. "The training has been awesome. We're learning a lot of things most (Airmen) don't know."

During the final day of training, the students are put through the live-fire exercise. The exercise takes allows the Airmen to apply what they learned in the classroom.

Master Sgt. Walter Voltz, who is deployed from Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., was acting as a convoy commander during a live-fire training exercise.

"Practicing these drills will help save lives," he said. "It's vital for combat operations."

Instructors monitored their progress, noting which vehicles are able to maintain their course heading while effectively firing on targets.

No one was returning their fire, but the instructors taught them in the

classroom what they needed to do if they were engaged by hostile forces.

The course included training the Airmen what they should do if an assault on a convoy results in injuries. The Airmen practiced securing an area, treating the wounded and assessing their condition. They also learned how to set up a landing zone for medical evacuation.

"The fundamentals we're learning keep us better prepared for contingent operations in Iraq," said Staff Sgt. Lawrence Prieto who is deployed from Peterson AFB, Colo. "A lot of us haven't gone through this training, and we needed to."

Regardless of what branch of the military Americans are serving in, those fighting in Iraq and Southwest Asia have one common goal: staying alive. Learning to see there is less of a defining line between the services is part of learning to achieve this goal.

"The Iraqi people need our help," Sergeant Larson said. "Whether you're [in the] Air Force or Army, it doesn't matter. In the end, we're all one military ... fighting the same war together."



Photo by Senior Airman James Dillard

A transportation Airman lies "wounded" on the ground during a convoy exercise. The exercise is designed to teach Airmen traveling in a convoy how to react if a truck is disabled and casualties are sustained. Once a defensive ring is set up around the wounded and disabled vehicle, the wounded are medically evacuated from a nearby landing zone.



Courtesy photos

Tuskegee T-1

ROTC cadets from Tuskegee University check out a T-1A from the 99th Flying Training Squadron, based at Randolph Air Force Base, on the flightline March at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. Members of the 99th FTS provided 23 cadets with orientation flights out of Maxwell and around the local area, flying the cadets over the school grounds and historic Moton Field, the site where the first pilots of the original 99th received their initial flight training in preparation for combat duty in WWII.

Road to fitness can be bumpy

By Senior Airman Kara Philp
56th Fighter Wing public affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. —For some Air Force members, the road to better health and fitness is a bumpy one.

For people with disappointing waist measurements, health officials have information and advice to help.

When combined with the run and strength components of the fitness test, abdominal circumference is a good indicator of a person's overall fitness level.

"The new fitness assessment is based on the three components ... to impact a person's health and fitness: cardiovascular health, strength and body composition," said Capt. Risa Riepma, 56th Medical Group health promotions manager.

Each portion of the assessment is important. The final score is a calculation of all three.

According to several research studies, abdominal circumference is an independent risk factor for disease.

"This means that your height and

age is not a factor," Captain Riepma said. "If your waist exceeds 35 inches (females) or 40 inches (males), you are at greater risk for diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some types of cancer."

According to Captain Riepma, this places more of the responsibility on the person to make physical fitness a daily concern.

"This is not a pass or fail program, but an assessment that always leaves room for improvement," she said. "We all should be continuously striving to improve our health and fitness and not become complacent or frustrated with our initial score."

Physical training is the backbone of fitness enhancement, Captain Riepma said. She has several recommendations for proper weight loss.

"Make sure you're engaging in cardiovascular activity for at least 30 minutes at a high enough intensity (so) you feel like your body is stressed (usually 70 to 85 percent of max heart rate) several times each week," she said.

Running, cycling, swimming continuously and aerobics are good examples of cardiovascular activity. Basketball and racquetball do not count as aerobic activity.

Strength training is important for gaining muscle mass and increasing metabolic rate.

"I'd have to say if one is pressed for time, cardiovascular activity is more critical," she said.

Captain Riepma suggests keeping a food record to document everything consumed and to estimate portion sizes.

"People usually overestimate the amount of exercise they do and underestimate the amount of food they eat," she said. "This is a good tool to increase awareness of food choices and portions."

Weight doesn't come off overnight, she added.

"Most Americans like to see quick results, but if they want to lose it healthfully, it's a gradual process," she said.

Captain Riepma said don't gauge progress by the scale alone.

"Muscle may be replacing fat," she said. "Since muscle weighs more than fat, you would not see an improvement unless you tape or pay closer attention to how your clothes are fitting."

When people lose weight, it comes from all over your body.

"There is no way to 'spot reduce,' which means when you lose weight it will come from all over your body not just one location," Captain Riepma said.

Whether you have several inches to lose or a half inch, the recommendations are the same. Sit-ups will help tone abdominal muscles, but there needs to be a calorie deficit that comes from exercise and consuming fewer calories in order for fat to be lost.

"Body wraps and diet pills are costly, temporary and often unsafe. I don't recommend them," Captain Riepma said.

For people looking to go the extra mile, Captain Riepma suggests a personal trainer, fitness or weight-loss buddy.

Lieutenant wins national track, field championship

SAN ANTONIO — First Lt. James Parker, an Air Force world-class athlete from Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont., won the 2004 USA Track and Field Indoor National Championship Weight Throw, held Feb. 26 to 29 in Boston.

The weight-throw competitor credited the win to his intense training regimen and fine-tuning his technique during the warm-up session just before the official throws.

After throwing a foul on his first throw and a safety throw of 71.87 feet on his second attempt, the lieutenant threw a strong 73.36 feet on his third try. He followed this by a foul

on his fourth attempt and then completed the event with the winning throw of 76.49 feet. This beat his closest competitor by more than 2 feet.

His throws of 73.36 and 76.49 set his personal records for indoor meets.

Lieutenant Parker is one of the smallest competitors in the weight throw. He attributes his success to participation in the Air Force World-Class Athlete Program and the direct opportunity for extensive training in his sport.

(Courtesy of Air Force
Print News)



Courtesy photo

First Lt. James Parker won the 2004 USA Track and Field Indoor National Championship Weight Throw. The competition took place Feb. 26 to 29 in Boston. Lieutenant Parker participates in the Air Force World Class Athlete Program and is assigned to Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont.